

Record

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WMU commissions 'Missions Innovators'

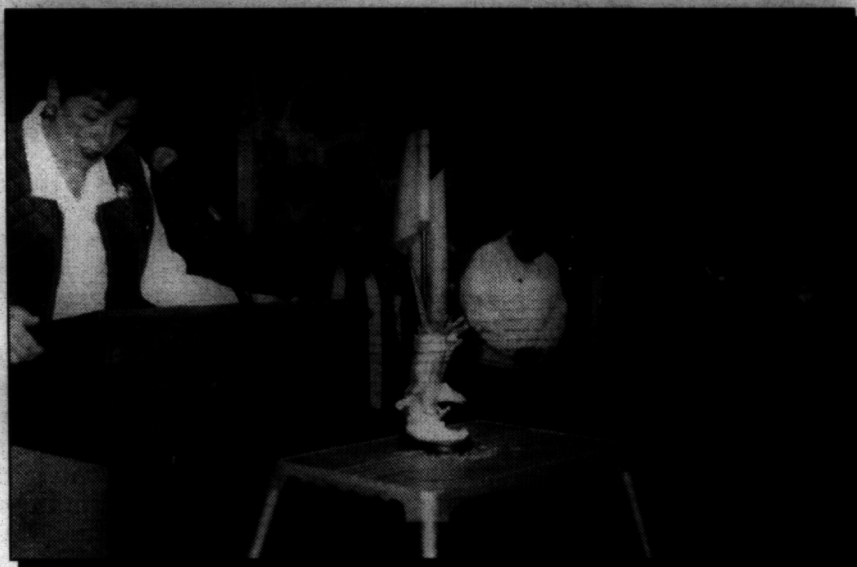
TALLADEGA, Ala. (BP) — Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) executive board commissioned the organization's first "Missions Innovators" and discussed the future relationship between WMU and Southern Baptists' mission boards during their annual January meeting.

The meeting was held Jan. 10-14 at Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly, Talladega, Ala. Along with WMU executive board members, the meeting also included national WMU staff, state WMU staff, 10 international missionaries, and a number of other guests.

Three staff members of the national WMU were commissioned as the first Missions Innovators, a program WMU is piloting during 1998 in partnership with Baptist state conventions in Alabama, Texas, and Virginia. The goal of the project is to work one-on-one with churches and associations to develop and expand their missions involvement.

The three innovators and their assigned states are Kathy Burns, Alabama, previously a WMU preschool consultant; Sheryl Churchill, Virginia, previously a WMU leadership consultant; and Sylvia DeLoach, Texas, previously a children's consultant. Each will serve for one year in their respective states.

The relationship between WMU and Southern Baptists' two mission boards was a common theme in the addresses of WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien, International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin and North America



PRAYER FOR INNOVATORS — Wanda Lee, national president for Woman's Missionary Union, closed her address with a prayer for the organization's first Missions Innovators during the Jan. 10-14 WMU executive board meeting in Talladega, Ala. Standing with Lee are the innovators and the WMU executive directors from their assigned states: (from left) Sheryl Churchill and Earlene Jessee, Virginia; Sylvia DeLoach and Joy Fenner, Texas; and Beverly Miller and Kathy Burns, Alabama. (Photo by Teresa Dickens)

Mission Board (NAMB) President Bob Reccord.

Historically, WMU has had a close working relationship with the two mission boards, including a coordinating group that jointly planned curriculum emphases and the promotion of the national missions offerings. With the restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention, nothing has been developed to replace these formal avenues of planning.

During her address, O'Brien acknowledged the new situation had created "tension" for WMU leaders, but noted they had not "waited idly nor do we have plans to relinquish the

original' God-ordained purpose for which WMU was organized almost 110 years ago. Yet, we have cooperated so long that we hardly know how not to do so."

As the direction of the two boards has taken form in recent weeks, she said, "It does appear that we have a place in the work of both mission boards, in the mission offerings promotion, and in missions education. Leadership of both mission boards have stated their intention to partner with us."

However, she noted, the relationship will be different than in the past. "We must be aware that we are not the sole partner... nor are we equal partners since we serve at their dis-

cretion." But, she assured the board, "We will negotiate for our place ... and learn to operate in a more ambiguous atmosphere than we have known in the recent past."

Rankin agreed with O'Brien. "We can't look to the past to see what relationships will be in the future," he told the WMU board. "Maybe one of the things that continues to bog us down is the way things used to be and holding on to that ... while at the same time the convention is changing, our country is changing, our churches are changing (and) our visions and strategies are changing."

"Let's come together and with a joint vision explore where God wants us to go and where he wants us to be together," Rankin said. "That is as much your role as it is mine — not for me to define what that role and relationship will be. I want you to hear an openness and commitment to do that."

Reccord also assured WMU leaders NAMB leadership wants to maintain a close working relationship between the two agencies.

"Although things are in process and we don't have all the answers yet, I do not want to walk into the future without WMU," he said.

Nate Adams, NAMB's vice president of media and missions education, echoed Reccord's commitment to WMU. "You are one of our most important partners. Some of the most important things we do, we do with you — the Annie Armstrong Offering (for North American Missions) and missions education," Adams said.

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

Church and Court

Baptists attend vigil

Super day for violence

Prisoners earn degrees

Visit supplies badly needed drug

BANGALORE, India (BP) — Bangalore Baptist Hospital faced a serious shortage of an important antidote for the Indian cobra's deadly venom until a pharmaceutical company executive visited the hospital in November, according to Dr. Rebekah Naylor, the Southern Baptist International Mission Board physician who directs the hospital.

Richard Celeste, the new United States ambassador to India, and Donna Shalala, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, visited the hospital Nov. 30. During a dinner with local business leaders, Naylor discussed the hospital's inability to locate polyvalent antivenin, an expensive drug needed for snake-bite victims, who frequently come to the hospital for treatment.

"Though his company does not handle this drug at all, within three days, D. McDonald, managing director of Smith Kline Beecham Pharmaceuticals (India), located stock in north India, airfreighted 200 vials to Bangalore and donated this entire amount to the hospital," Naylor said.

The visit also was covered extensively by the local press, giving excellent exposure to the hospital.

Looking back

10 years ago

Alumni, students, administration, and faculty of Southeastern Seminary tell the presidential search committee they see no need nor have any desire for changes in the 37-year old seminary. Robert C. Crowley, chairman of the search committee, responds by comparing that attitude to the Middle Ages.

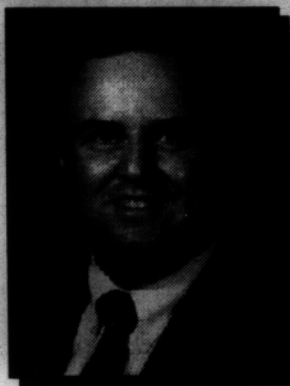
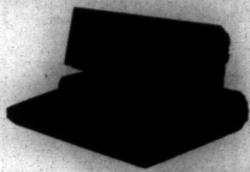
20 years ago

During its executive board meeting in Birmingham, the Woman's Missionary Union approves organizational plans for 1979-80 under the theme "Life-Changing Commitments" and dedicates its five floor, \$500,000 new building expansion.

50 years ago

Twelve Mississippi men are among a record 232 candidates for degrees from the Southern Seminary, Louisville, in May 1948. Among the Mississippians are David Ruff Grant (B.D.); Ernest Earl Kelly, Jr. (Th.M.); and Perry Clifton Perkins (B.D.).

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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The importance of our children

No child ever stood over his parents' graves and said, "I wish Mom and Dad had spent more time at their offices." As axiomatic as ever in our modern culture, it seems quite a few of us parents haven't quite caught on to the deep meaning of that phrase — or caught on too late.

A recent column in The Wall Street Journal by Mary Shellenberger, entitled "Work and Family," drives home that point in a most poignant manner. She asked some of the top executives in the country what they would change if they could go back in time and rearrange their careers and personal lives.

Their immediate answers, almost to a person, detailed the regret they feel for putting off their children in pursuit of worldly success.

"I wish I had known sooner that if you miss a child's play or performance or sporting event, you will have forgotten a year later the work emergency that caused you to miss it. But the child won't have forgotten that you weren't there. I learned it, but not in time for my own kids," said Laurel Cutler, vice-chairman of Foote Cone and Belding. (The firm's business and location were not reported in the column.)

J. Michael Cook, chief executive officer of the worldwide accounting firm of Deloitte and Touche, echoed Cutler's sentiments.

"I wish I'd understood the importance of that Thursday afternoon soccer game. But it was a given that you dedicated yourself to your job," he said.

Faith Wohl, former head of the federal Office of Workplace Initiatives and before that one of DuPont's first female senior managers, said, "I should have learned to relax. My children play as hard as they work. I never learned to do that."

Randall Tobias, chairman and chief executive officer of drug manufacturer Eli Lilly and Co., provided the best description of

what those lost years now mean to him.

"I can remember some blurry choices when my children were younger, when I may not have attended a play or soccer game because I had some conflicting business interest. It's ironic that 25 years later I can remember I didn't go to that event, but I can't remember the business thing I did and in some cases I have to stop to remember where I was even working.

"When it comes time for someone to write my obituary, I don't want to be defined solely by the boxes I happened to occupy on organizational charts. As important as that is to me, I want to be defined as the father of my children, as someone who made my community a better place," he said.

That's powerful advice from some folks who have been there. However, Christians have known — or in many cases should have known — that family and children are important to our Savior and therefore should be equally important to us.

After all, the very name of the One by which we identify ourselves means we should be a reflection of him, and that includes what he taught about children and family relations.

Maybe we're beginning to catch on. It's getting harder each day to keep count of the parents (overwhelmingly mothers) who are electing family over workplace, at least during the crucial formative years of infancy and early childhood.

It is up to those of us who choose to

"LET'S PRETEND THAT I'M ANGRY, DAD — NOW, HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT — SAY SOMETHING SWEET TO ME!"



remain in the workplace (overwhelmingly fathers) to support and encourage those who choose to stay home to raise our children. It is inarguable that a parent can have a daily impact on his/her child that a rented stranger can never hope to match, no matter how good the intentions.

Don't put off your children. Treat them as if you really believe what our Savior said about them (Matt. 19:13-14). If you don't, you can always be in the next columnist's survey in The Wall Street Journal.

GUEST OPINION

Continue discussion; end the war!

By Thomas M. Atwood, pastor
First Church, Oxford

begin with a commitment to honesty, integrity, and truth. It is simply not honest to accuse "less than five-point" brothers of brazen humanism. It is equally dishonest when "five-pointers" are labeled as non-missionary at best and "murderers" at worst.

Fairness and honesty will eliminate that kind of rhetoric.

The fact is, the varying shades of reformed theology have both waxed and waned in our history. Baptist orthodoxy has required some "non-debatables" but this issue can and should be gracefully discussed.

Vigorous debate is healthy. One should be allowed to set forth a strong argument without ridicule, accusation, or slander. Within the bounds of Baptist orthodoxy, the many and diverse views on this subject should be respectfully heard

and reverently considered.

Our Southern Baptist roots are in the middle ground of reformed theology. According to Torbet's "A History of the Baptists" (pp. 220-297), Baptists in the South sloughed off the two extremes of Arminianism and hyper-Calvinism.

Baptist thought and life were formed by the meshing of Calvinistic doctrine with the revivalistic emphases of the Great Awakening (p. 254). Since the 1890's a moderate Calvinism has enjoyed popularity, but in recent years a more consistent Calvinism has regained growing interest.

Baptist orthodoxy has consistently included all of the theological turf that exists between the two extremes.

The Arminian Baptists formed the denominations we know as General Baptists and

Free-Will Baptists while the Baptist Church of Christ (now extinct), Old School Baptists, and Primitive Baptists were created by the hyper-Calvinists (pp. 254-265).

Our human tendency is to feel "threatened" by views that are not perceived as harmonious with our own. Lashing out at those with whom we disagree sometimes reveals insecurity in our own beliefs. Misunderstanding often exists and we are blind to our own ignorance.

Real humility keeps us sensitive to the absence of personal infallibility. Only God and his word are infallible.

I am making a plea for tolerance, kindness, humility, and patience by all who engage the issue. Perfect congruity will never be achieved. Wisely, our forefathers have been unwilling to make this an issue that divides us.

Can we do anything less? Within our historic parameters can we not "agree to disagree" in this area.

Much more learning will add more light and less heat. Much more humility will add grace and respect for the views of others.

For his kingdom's sake, continue the discussion, but end the war!

'Keeping Your Church Out of Court' set Jan. 22-23

By Tim Nicholas
MBCB Communications Director

"Keeping Your Church Out of Court" is the title and object of a conference taking place in Jackson on Jan. 22 and Tupelo on Jan. 23.

The conference will deal with issues concerning liabilities of churches and non-profit organizations. The program will offer information on how churches can conduct their affairs in a manner that provides some legal insulation from lawsuits.

Specific topics include charitable giving, personal injury and property damage claims, hiring and firing practices, child abuse reporting and prevention, and taxes and governmental compliance.

The Jackson conference takes place Jan. 22 at Broadmoor Church, 787 E. Northside Drive, Jackson; and on Jan. 23 at Calvary Church, 501 West Main Street, Tupelo.

Both sessions begin at 9 a.m. and adjourn at 3:45 p.m.

This conference is designed for church business administrators, church staff, personnel and finance committee members, church trustees, and legal professionals. Speakers will be

◆ William R. Korb Jr., Sheila

L. Korb, and Michael V. Bourland, all attorneys with Bourland, Smith, Wall and Wenzel law firm in Fort Worth, and general counsel to Tarrant (County, Texas) Baptist Association, Inc., and trust/estate counsel to Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

◆ William Townsend, assistant dean of the Mississippi College School of Law in Jackson.

◆ John Dudley, vice president of property and casualty insurance for the Southern Baptist Annuity Board in Dallas.

A registration fee of \$35 includes a 154-page notebook especially edited for Mississippi law.

For details, contact the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, phone 1-800-748-1651.



THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST
Record

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NAMB names Mississippian to position

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — A Mississippian and former national missionary is among the five new staff members announced by the North American Mission Board (NAMB).

Susan Peugh has joined the staff of the NAMB as a student volunteer mobilization associate, responsible for mission youth groups, special projects (other than summer missionaries), World Tour development, and junior high development.

Prior to joining the staff, Peugh served as the agency's national student missions promotion specialist. As such, she coordinated volunteer recruitment efforts in 32 states and Canada and supervised semester missionaries.

Peugh is a graduate of Mississippi State University with a bachelor of science in elementary education.

Gibbs Frazeur has joined the NAMB staff as photography department manager/special assignment photographer. He will coordinate the photography efforts of the new flagship magazine as well as other NAMB missions publications.

Frazeur has been a freelance photographer in Louisville, Ky., for five years and has done photography work for Southern Seminary as well as corporate and location photography shoots.

Jerome King, a former associate in the

Georgia Baptist Convention church extension department, has joined the NAMB staff as the African American church planting associate.

King was appointed to the GBC in 1995 from his hometown of Savannah, Ga., where he was pastor of Christ's Community Church.

David Howard has been named as the metro and mega planning associate in the associational strategy team. In this capacity, he will be instrumental in developing strategy for working with Southern Baptist associations.

Howard formerly served as director of multihousing ministries for Central Baptist Association in Phoenix.

Scott Grissom has joined NAMB from Dallas, where he has coordinated "First Priority" the past 18 months. First Priority is a multi-denominational network of churches that equips youth ministers and their students for campus evangelism. He will utilize the same strategy at NAMB to help the agency reach high school campuses for Christ.

Grissom is a graduate of Criswell College in Dallas and has spent nine years on staff with Southern Baptist evangelist Jay Strack, speaking at school assemblies, retreats and camps.

Marshall Chambers, former metro and

mega planning associate, has accepted the position of strategic cities planning coordinator, east, on the strategic focus cities team. He will develop and recommend high-impact strategies for reaching cities in the eastern portion of the United States.

Chambers was employed by the Home Mission Board in 1990 as associate director of associational evangelism and in 1993 was named director of mega focus cities. He is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary.

Marshall Chambers, former metro and mega planning associate, has accepted the position of strategic cities planning coordinator, east, on the strategic focus cities team. He will develop and recommend high-impact strategies for reaching cities in the eastern portion of the United States.

Putting wheels on ministry



Paul H. Dickson (left), pastor of Mountain Crest Church in Leadville, Co., accepts the keys to a 1991 Ford passenger van from Barri A. Shirley, business administrator for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB). The MBCB executive committee authorized transfer of the board-owned van — valued at \$10,025 — to the Colorado Baptist General Convention (CBGC) when the van was replaced with a newer model. CBGC in turn assigned the van to the work of Dickson's church. Mississippi and Colorado Baptists are currently involved in a joint partnership missions project in that western state. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Texas groups meet for prayer, talk

DALLAS (BP) — Leaders of the conservative Southern Baptists of Texas and the Baptist General Convention of Texas met four hours Jan. 8 in what was termed an "informal, unofficial season of prayer and open discussion."

In a short, written release given to news media following the meeting, the group agreed that no statement concerning the content or procedure of the meeting would be made. The news release did say the group "further agreed to meet again soon to continue prayer and discussion."

Following the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in Austin in November, conservative leaders in the state announced their intent to form a new state convention. Conservatives

have been critical of changes, approved at the Austin meeting, which they see as distancing the Texas convention from the Southern Baptist Convention.

Participants in the meeting, held in Dallas, were Robert Campbell, immediate past chairman of the BGCT executive board; Charles Davenport, chairman of the administrative committee of the BGCT executive board; Russell Dilday, president of the BGCT; Clyde Glazener, chairman of the BGCT executive board; William M. Pinson Jr., executive director for the BGCT executive board; Miles Seaborn, president of the SBT; Dee Slocum, vice president of the SBT; Gerald Smith, secretary-treasurer of the SBT; and Ronnie Yarber, administrative director of the SBT.

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE



January 1998:
Month of Prayer
to End Abortion
in Mississippi

Help available for crisis pregnancy centers

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — A crisis pregnancy is an emotionally charged event that radically changes a person's life. Some argue a woman has the right to choose, but according to Sylvia Boothe, "a woman has the right to be educated and counseled on the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual aspects of all her choices."

Staff and volunteers in crisis pregnancy ministries "have the joy" of walking with a woman through the crisis of an untimely pregnancy and helping her discover how God can work redemptively in her situation, said Boothe, who led the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) Alternatives to Abortion Ministries for 10 years, from 1988 until the end of December.

Alternatives to Abortion Ministries' objective is to assist churches, associations and state conventions in ministering to women who are facing crisis pregnancies or have experienced abortion.

Boothe has helped train volunteers for 37 crisis pregnancy centers (CPC). NAMB's Alternatives to Abortion office, established in 1987, undergirds the work of such centers by providing training and materials for workers and a nationwide database to help with referrals.

In communities without a CPC, a 12-hour conference is offered to teach people how to

minister to everyone involved in the pregnancy and how to pool resources in the community.

Procedures vary from one CPC to another, but typically a woman comes to the center for the free pregnancy test that most CPCs offer.

"Usually she's scared to death and it takes the last ounce of her energy to open the door and come in," said Boothe, who directed a CPC in Oklahoma City before joining NAMB.

Along with providing the pregnancy test, volunteers at a center will talk with the woman about her options and about the services the center can offer.

They also refer her to medical and other professional resources. What center workers hope to do is enable the client to make her own informed decision to have her baby, knowing she does not have to face that experience alone or without support.

The centers offer more than advice. Services typically offered to the mother-to-be include parenting classes, help to continue her education and become financially self-sufficient, a clothing room with maternity and baby clothes, sup-

port groups and discipleship programs.

Women aren't the only ones affected by crisis pregnancies. Men also need help when their child has been aborted. In some crisis pregnancy centers, up to half of all clients are men.

"I grew up in a Christian home and felt that a lot of rules didn't apply to me," said Steve Arterburn. "I thought I had the world figured out. Then, I got a girl pregnant while I was going to college."

Arterburn, co-founder and chairman of New Life Clinics, is a nationally known speaker and host of the New Life radio program. He speaks openly and honestly in sharing his story of abortion, the shame and guilt he experienced and how he finally received forgiveness and healing.

"All my dreams and plans seemed to be destroyed by this pregnancy. I didn't think of it as a baby. I thought of it as a situ-

ation I had to find a way out of as quickly as I could," Arterburn recounted.

Arterburn scheduled an abortion for his girlfriend, and she went along with it. Afterward, guilt and shame set in. "I couldn't get the baby back," he said. "I was sad that I had not talked to anyone who knew anything about alternatives to abortion."

"I started to think that God would never forgive me, that I had ruined my life and any hope of a relationship with God."

"As I have shared this with other men who have paid for abortions, they have told me that they have felt the same things I did," Arterburn said.

"I have learned that a real man is a protector of life and a provider for the life he creates. My prayer is that every man will be a hero to the baby he does not yet know, but a baby that will one day delight him by calling him Daddy."

Baptists at abortion prayer vigil



Combined youth choirs from First Church, Clinton, and Wynndale Church, Terry (above), perform on the south steps of the New Capitol in Jackson during the 10th annual Candlelight Prayer Vigil to End Abortion on Jan. 17. Vigil participants from Bethlehem Church, Morton (below), included pastor Johnny Beaver (right), who offered a prayer during the program; and Stacie Gordon (right) and Rachel George, who held aloft the vigil theme banner. (Photos by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Memorial offers healing place for grieving abortion victims

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (BP) — The National Memorial for the Unborn is "as significant as the Vietnam Memorial," said pro-life activist Carol Everett, a former abortion clinic owner.

The memorial, opened in 1994 in a former abortion clinic in Chattanooga, Tenn., describes itself as "a Christian ministry of healing devoted to the sanctity of human life and the memory of aborted children."

"The National Memorial for the Unborn gives women who lost children to abortion a place to mourn," said Everett, who underwent an abortion in 1973. "I'm pleased to be able to have a plaque for my child."

Everett, a member of the memorial's national advisory board, was in the abortion industry from 1977 until her conversion to Christianity in 1983. She is the founder of Life Network, a pro-life organization based in Dallas.

Typical plaques at National Memorial for the Unborn

Amy Lauren Krueger
December 1980
A Part of Me Died Too

My Babies
1986-87
I Miss You Both — I'm Sorry

Baby Smith
1976
If We Had Known

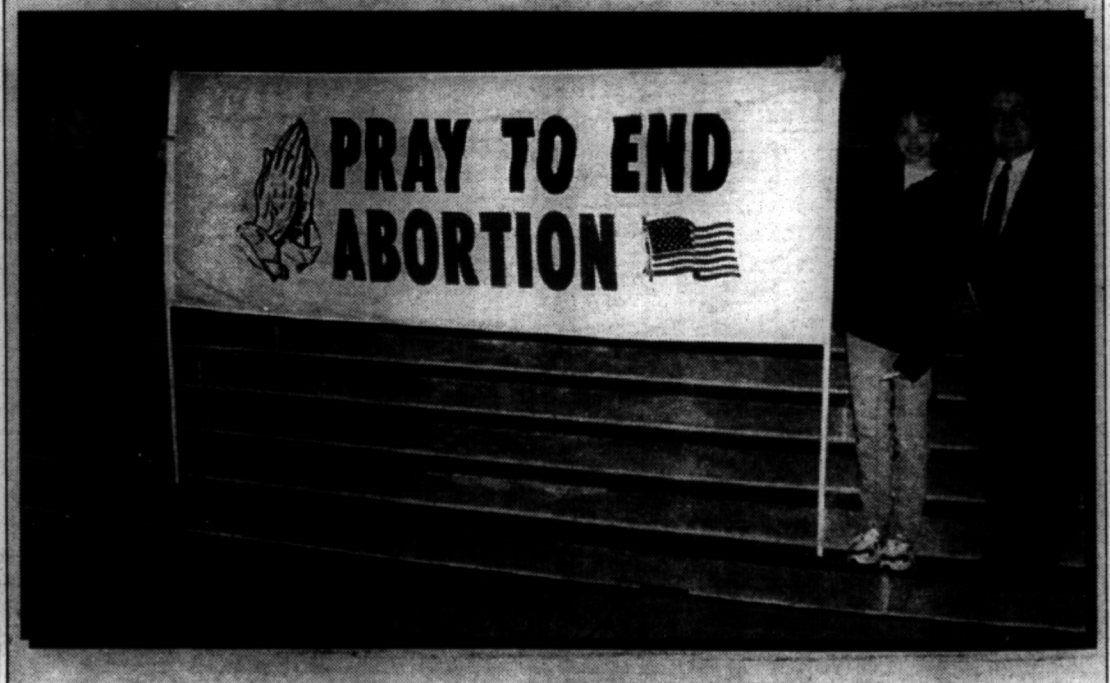
To My Lost Baby
September 1980
Forgive Me My Trespass

Harris Baby
1990
I'll Hold You In Heaven

The National Memorial for the Unborn is regarded as the first national location dedicated to healing the pain associated with the loss of aborted children. Mothers, fathers, and families who have lost children to abortion can place a brass nameplate on the memorial's "Wall of Names." Plates may include the name of a child, a special message or Scripture reference and a date.

The memorial may be contacted at 1-800-505-5565. The donation for a memorial to an aborted child is left up to each individual.

The abortion clinic in which the memorial now is located performed an estimated 35,000-plus abortions during its 18 years as a clinic. Also in the building now is a crisis pregnancy center, AAA Women's Services.



Game day a super day for domestic abuse

By Carl M. White
Associate Editor

First in a series

Lucy (not her real name) is an attractive young woman with a preschooler and a problem accented every year at Super Bowl time.

She lived with an abusive husband.

According to John Kendrick, associate director of the Resource Center Network (RCN) in Pearl — a family preservation agency for abused and battered women and children in Mississippi — Super Bowl Sunday is the single most dangerous day for domestic violence in American society.

The combination of alcohol and other drugs, plus the stress caused by the outcome of the game, creates a situation ripe for domestic violence, Kendrick said.

"A kid or the wife comes into the den and says something and 'wham,' he takes them out," he said.

RCN was founded in 1976 by Aleene Robinson, herself an abused woman. It is a private, 501(c)3 non-profit organization and has grown to be the second largest family abuse service in Mississippi.

RCN operates two shelters and serves 21 counties in central Mississippi from their offices in Pearl.

Lucy first came to one of the RCN shelters several months ago. Now she lives there as the resident assistant. Its location is confidential for the security of the 40 or more women and children living there at any given time. Here Lucy found safety and freedom.

"I was told how long it should take to go shopping, then questioned about everything I bought. When I came here it was like being set free," Lucy said.

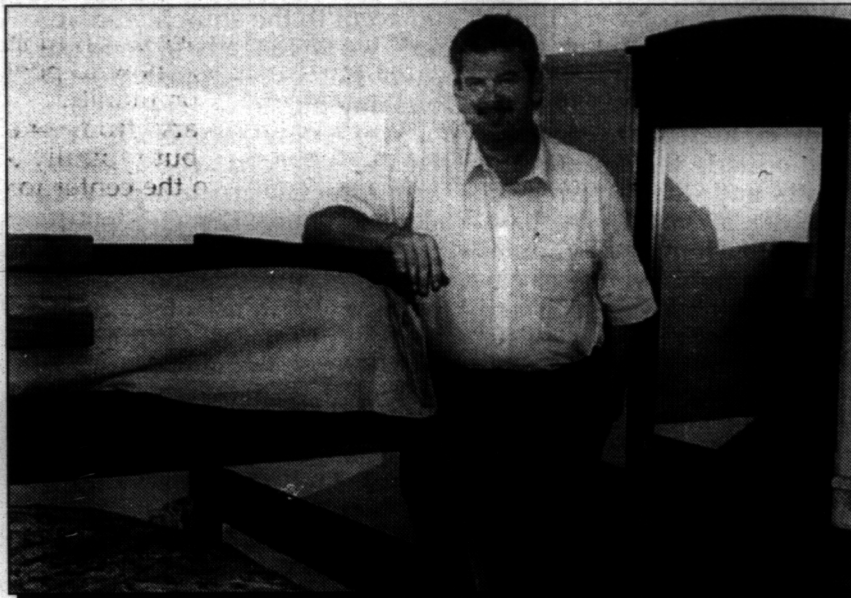
Kendrick pointed out that Lucy has also found another kind of freedom, a spiritual freedom that comes from knowing the Lord.

"That's right," Lucy said with a joyous smile. "I shudder to think where I would be now were it not for this place and for prayer," she said.

Lucy's story could be repeated 3000 times. That's the number of families sheltered by RCN since 1990.

Tragically, in that same time period, over 8,000 women have called the RCN crisis line and met the criteria for shelter services, but because of the lack of space at the RCN shelter and other shelters in the area, only about 3,000 could be assisted, according to Kendrick.

Kendrick knows that if they can shelter a woman and her children, they can help them physically, emotionally, and spiritually.



PLACE OF SHELTER — John Kendrick, associate director for the Resource Center Network, inspects a room at one of RCN's two shelters for abused and battered women and children in Mississippi. (Photo by Carl M. White)

"As a Christian organization, we take the opportunity to introduce everyone of our clients to the Lord," he said.

RCN's return rate is only 2%, Kendrick said. That means, of the clients they take into sheltered care, only 2 out of every 100 return to sheltered care within a year.

Kendrick, a Lamar County native and bivocational pastor of Providence Church, Pearl, has been working at RCN for three years.

His primary responsibility is fundraising. He also serves as a

consultant on family abuse and violence for the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission (CAC).

For more information on domestic violence, contact Elizabeth Holmes at CAC, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800, or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

John Kendrick can be contacted at RCN, P.O. Box 6302, Pearl, MS 39288-6302. Telephone: (601) 932-4198, or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 266-4198.

Tax measure introduced in state House

House Bill (HB) 82 to exempt churches from paying state sales tax on goods and services has been introduced

the current session of the Mississippi Legislature by Rep. V. C. Manning of Neshoba County. HB 82 also provides sales tax exemption to other religious bodies such as associational and denominational groups, and their integrated auxiliaries. Churches and other religious bodies are presently required to pay state sales tax on all purchases. Persons wishing to contact their legislators about HB 82 should call (601) 359-3770, or write to their legislators by name at P.O. Box 1018, Jackson, MS, 39205-1018. For more information on HB 82 and other legislative activities, contact the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Baptist Book Store shoppers bolster hunger fund

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Shoppers in Baptist Book Stores across the United States have donated \$12,147 to the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's (ERLC) World Hunger Fund.

Giving mostly change from purchases in the 71-store chain, customers contributed

in canisters at the check-out counters beginning June 1 and continuing through the end of 1997.

According to Mark Scott, vice president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's retail group, the effort began as the result of employees' desire to be involved in a missions endeavor outside normal retail activity.

"Because Baptist Book Stores and Lifeway Christian Stores reach so many persons, we can provide wide exposure to the cause of world hunger relief."

"This is a project that appeals to Southern Baptists as well as other evangelical Christians who visit our stores," Scott said.

Scott said contributions to the SBC World Hunger Fund will continue to be received at Baptist Book Stores through 1998.

Canisters will be available at check-out counters, and people who wish to make contributions other than change may do so by check or credit card.

Gifts to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund received by the ERLC or the SBC

Executive Committee, both in Nashville, Tenn., are used completely for hunger ministry, with nothing taken for administration or promotion costs.

Unless otherwise specified by the donor, 80% of the funds go to the International Mission Board and 20% to the North American Mission Board.

Missionaries and volunteers, in turn, use the funds to support nearly 200 hunger ministries in the United States and 58 other countries.



GENEROUS BROWSERS — Shoppers in the national Baptist Book Store chain gave \$12,147 in change from their purchases between June 1 and Dec. 31, 1997, to help fight world hunger through the SBC's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission. Mark Scott (right), vice president of the Sunday School Board's retail group and Richard Land, president of the ERLC, celebrate the effort's success at the Nashville Baptist Book Store. (BP photo by Jim Veneman.)

Bivocational ministries group sets organization

The Mississippi Council for Bivocational Ministries was organized Dec. 9 at the Baptist Building in Jackson for the purposes of affirming and highlighting bivocational ministries around the state, according to one of the organizers present at the meeting.

"A specific intent of the council is to have a bivocational representative in each association, because nearly one-half of (Mississippi Baptist) churches have bivocational ministers," said Farris W. Smith, director of missions for Simpson Association in Mendenhall.

"In addition, a handbook will be developed to identify, define, and encourage the bivocational setting. The handbook and a pamphlet also being developed will be available to any church

or person who may have questions about this important ministry," Smith said.

Among those present at the organization meeting was Dale Holloway, pastor of Hickory Ridge Church in Florence who also serves as the national missionary for bivocational ministries at the Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board.

The next scheduled meeting of the council is slated for June 2. Anyone interested in bivocational ministries is invited to attend. For more information on the bivocational ministries group, contact Matt Buckles, Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

THANKS FOR SUPPORT

Editor:

Prospero Ano Novo, this is the greeting of Brazilians as the new year enters.

In our church as 1998 was coming in, there were nine people who made their profession of faith and then were baptized. Just as we saw the New Year approaching at 15 minutes before midnight, we were celebrating the Lord's Supper, and at 0:15 we were singing a final hymn.

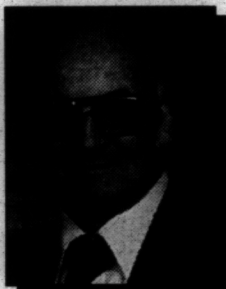
E.L. Roberts, retired pastor, dies at age 79

Eugene L. Roberts of Brookhaven, 79, died Jan. 3 at the Baptist Hospital in Jackson. Funeral services were held Jan. 6 at First Church, Brookhaven.

In his retirement he remained active in Southern Baptist work as interim and supply pastor. At the time of his death he was serving as pastor of McCall Creek Church in Franklin County. Roberts pastored churches in Mississippi, Alabama, and Texas for 60 years, and retired as director of missions in Lincoln and Copiah Associations in 1983.

Roberts, a graduate of Clarke College, received a master of divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary.

Survivors include Willie Mae Roberts, his wife of 51 years; sons, Leonard Roberts, Charlotte, N. C., and David Roberts, Brookhaven; daughter, Ruth Luncford, Senatobia; brother, Doug Roberts, Fairhope, Ala.; sisters, Audrey Perry, and Betty Vilain, both of Fairhope, Ala., and six grandchildren.



Roberts

After fellowship and greeting their new members, we sat down to a meal at the house adjacent to the church, and at 3 a.m. we were ready to go to our own homes — most people walking home.

We enjoy receiving the Baptist Record each week, keeping us in touch with English. May The Cry of the People around the world, be heard, understood, and become the Call of God for more volunteers to go, and more church members to believe that their contributions each Sunday do make a difference as God multiplies — the cheerful gift. May many more Baptists of Mississippi give of their children, so that Jesus will become a true friend of more people groups.

God and the missionaries around the world are grateful to the Baptists of Mississippi for their gifts to the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Offering.

Veronica and Bob Erwin
Brazil

SEARCHING FOR HYMNALS

Editor:

Ridgecrest Baptist Church of Route 9 Box 18, Corinth, Mississippi 38834 is in the process of enlarging our church sanctuary. God has blessed over the past two years and the church is growing to the point that we must expand. Due to this expansion, we are in need of more hymnals, which are no longer in print. We would like to know if there is a church that

may have some of these hymnals they no longer need and would be interested in selling or donating them to us.

We are looking for the 1975 edition of The Baptist Hymnal (color blue). If so, please contact us by writing to the address listed above or call (601) 287-1272 or 287-1137. Your help would be greatly appreciated. May God bless you.

Charles Stephenson, pastor
Ridgecrest Church, Corinth

Newspaper deadlines

The deadline for news items is one calendar week prior to requested publication date. For example, a news item to be published in the issue dated February 19 must be received no later than February 12.

The deadline for advertising insertions is two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date. For example, an ad to be published in the issue dated February 19 must be received no later than February 5.

For more information, contact The Baptist Record at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

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May God help us to be faithful to these marks of evangelical identity as we seek to build the kind of school which will honor the Lord Jesus Christ and serve the upbuilding of His church.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Timothy George

Dean



Timothy George



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Prisoners celebrate degrees from NOBTS

ANGOLA, La. (BP) — Sixteen men incarcerated at Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola stepped forward to do something no other prisoner likely has ever done — receive a degree from an accredited theological institution, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS).

The commencement service Jan. 8 also was a first for New Orleans Seminary, one of six seminaries of the Southern Baptist Convention, in that the 16 students who completed the associate in pastoral ministries degree were the first group to grad-

uate from the seminary's two-year-old extension center at the penitentiary.

"There is no life God cannot redeem," NOBTS President Chuck Kelley told the graduates, family members and prison officials attending the graduation ceremony, held within the prison's multiple locked gates, razor-wire fences and iron bars.

As tears of joy came down the faces of the prisoners and their families during the commencement service, Kelley declared the day's events to be a time of celebration and redemption for the graduates.



BREAKING FREE — A thankful prisoner at Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola, La., joyfully embraces Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Seminary, following the seminary's first commencement service at the prison on Jan. 8. (Photo by Steve Achord, NOBTS)

Mississippians graduate NOBTS

New Orleans Seminary held commencement exercises on Dec. 19.

Mississippians receiving masters of divinity degrees were: Edward Nick Holloway, Biloxi; Brian Thomas McKee, minister of youth at Springhill Church, Poplarville; Jerry F. Hodges, Greenwood; Clinton T. White, associate pastor and youth/education minister at Bayou View Church, Gulfport; and Robert Michael Stewart, Batesville.

Receiving the master of arts were: D. Brent Manasco, minister of education and youth at Central Church, McComb; and James C. Wilson Jr., minister of youth and

education at Crane Creek Church, Perkinston. Henry Clay Hunter Jr., Picayune, received the bachelor of arts degree.

Receiving the bachelor of general studies degree were Cletus Moak, pastor of Providence Church, Meadville; Richard Scott Carter, minister of students and education at Eastside Church, Pearl; and Levi A. Helmuth, whose home church is Michael Memorial Church, Gulfport, participated in the ceremony for the bachelor of general studies. Jon Mark Vanlandingham, pastor of Central Church, Benton, received an associate in pastoral ministries degree.

The Angola extension center, one of NOBTS' 14 extension center campuses across the Southeast, now has a capacity of 50 students, with many more on a waiting list.

The center was started in 1995 at the invitation of prison warden Burl Cain after hundreds of prisoners had completed the "Experiencing God" discipleship study and wanted more education to prepare for ministry — whether inside the prison or out. Currently nearly 20 congregations are functioning inside the prison.

Angola is home to 5,000 maximum-security adult male inmates. Of this number, 84 are violent offenders — convicted of murder, aggravated rape, or armed robbery.

Eighty-three percent of the inmates will never be released from prison.

With these statistics, Warden Cain said hope is essential to reach the men for Christ. Many ministers — such as the ones in the NOBTS associate degree program — are needed to reach their fellow inmates.

"God meant for you to be here today," Cain said during the service. "Set the right standard. Be God's torchbearer. Keep the faith and set an example for the other incarcerated men."

In order to enroll in the seminary program, inmates must have demonstrated a level of commitment within one of the prison congregations.

"God provided," was how student Leander Gallet chose to express his feelings about NOBTS' degree program available at the prison.

"This is a reality because of God's hand and not man, and because God has allowed me to be in this program, he has something for me to do with my life."

As occurred during the Dec. 19 commencement on the main campus, each graduate received a leather New American Standard Bible, donated by the Lockman Foundation, as well as a second Bible, donated by the Baptist Book Store located on the seminary campus, both presented by Jimmy W. Dukes, NOBTS dean of the undergraduate faculty and extension center system.

Following the service, Dukes said, "Many of these men have never finished anything in their lives, but now they are strengthened because they have God's call on their lives."

"They now have purpose."

Mississippians graduating from SWBTS announced

FORT WORTH, Texas — Students claiming Mississippi as their home state graduated from Southwestern Seminary during fall commencement Dec. 13. President Kenneth S. Hemphill awarded degrees from the seminary's schools of theology, religious education, and church music to 270 students.

Graduates from Mississippi, their hometowns, and churches

are: Bryan L. Bailey, Byhalia, Meadowbrook Church; Stacey E. Blake, Columbus, East End Church; Pat L. Gentry, Clinton, First Church; Steven L. Gibbs, Natchez, First Church; Jonathan E. Glover, Vicksburg, First Church; Kimberli D. Hood, Southaven, Colonial Hills Church; Louis P. May, Columbus, First Church; and Eric E. Smith, Florence, Cleary Church.



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SINCE 1953

Ex. committee v.p. planning retirement

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Ernest E. Mosley, executive vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee for the past 11 years, plans to retire April 1.

Prior to the Executive Committee, Mosley was executive director of the Illinois Baptist State Association from 1980-87 and a supervisor of pastoral ministries for the Baptist Sunday School Board from 1967-80.

He also was pastor of Pali View Church, Kaneohe, Hawaii, and the University Avenue Church, Honolulu, and served two terms as president of the Hawaii Baptist Convention.

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There is none righteous, not even one. (Rom. 3:10)

Accept God's love for you.
God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:8)

Acknowledge Christ as Lord.
If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. (Rom. 10:9)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Mississippi Baptist Church for spiritual guidance.

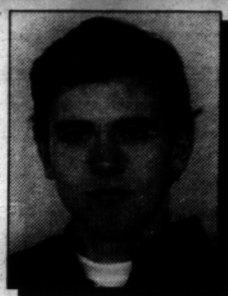
MS Positions Available

PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC for Adult and Youth Choirs. Send resumes to Ronnie Clark, Ruleville Baptist Church, PO Box 187, Ruleville, MS 38771.

RESUMES ARE BEING ACCEPTED by the First Baptist Church of Richton, MS, for the position of Minister of Youth and Education (music talent desirable). Resumes may be mailed to: Search Committee, PO Box 562, Richton, MS 39476.

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Corey Jackson, a Mississippi College freshman, was recently selected as the recipient of a \$750 Chevron Scholarship.



Jackson

He is the son of Joe and Billie Jackson of McComb. The scholarship is given annually by the Mississippi Foundation of Independent Colleges to a worthy freshman who demonstrates exceptional

ability in the area of mathematics and science.

The Mississippi College (MC) School of Nursing Honor Society has been approved for membership by the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing. Now in its 75th year, Sigma Theta Tau is one of the oldest and most prestigious honor societies for nursing in the country. In order to be considered by Sigma Theta Tau, MC School of Nursing's Honor Society, which was established three years ago, had to meet several criteria. The Society had

to present evidence of administrative support, community support, and scholarly activity. The MC chapter will be named when it is officially chartered on April 20, 1998.

The William Carey College Theatre will present three performances of "The Traveling Lady" by Horton Foote at 8 p.m. on Jan. 29-31. These are encore, benefit performances of the production which was entered in the Mississippi/Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival (ACTF) in October. As a result of the presentation at the state festival, it was selected for the Region IV ACTF Festival. Seats for performances of "The Traveling Lady," which will be performed in the O. L. Quave Theatre on Carey's Hattiesburg campus, may be reserved by calling (601) 582-6221. Since these are benefit performances,

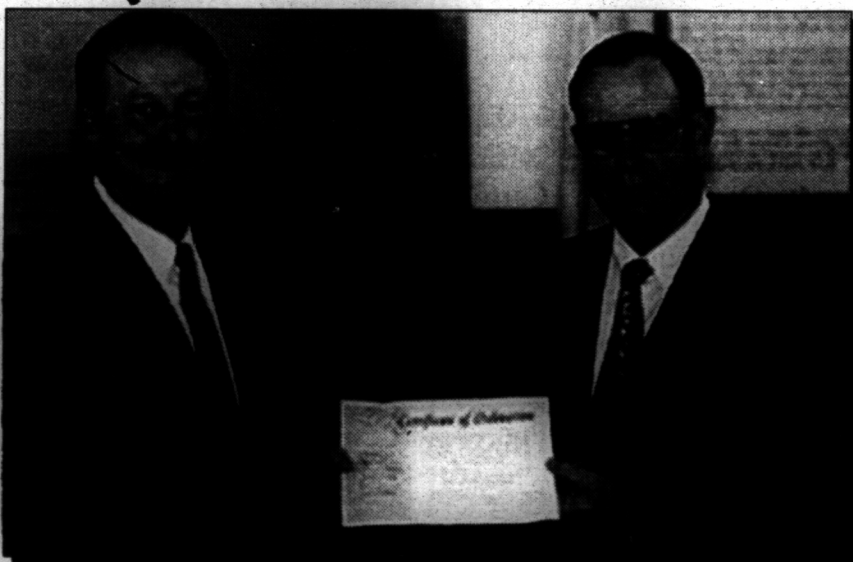
admission is by contribution, minimum of \$7 for students and \$10 for others.

William Carey College will present "Learning From Leadership," a public forum with area leaders and students, Jan. 28, at 11 a.m. in the Kresge Room of the Thomas Business Building on the Hattiesburg campus. This program is designed to acquaint students with current issues in society as seen by outstanding leaders in the fields of business, industry, and government. Carey alumnus Louis Guirola, United States Magistrate Judge Southern District of Mississippi, will speak at the presentation. The program is free. Judge Guirola will also speak at a luncheon in Wilkes Dining Hall at noon. Tickets for the luncheon are \$8. For more information or to reserve tickets for luncheon, call (601) 582-6192.

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Jewell Blain, 96, died on Nov. 24 in Pascagoula. Services were held at First Church, Pascagoula, on Nov. 26. She and her husband, Walter L. Blain, served in ministry in churches and associations in Mississippi and Alabama for 25 years prior to his death. After her husband's death, she continued to serve as a missionary with the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board. She was the oldest

member of First Church, Pascagoula, where she was actively involved in teaching Sunday School and other activities until three years ago when her health would no longer permit it. She is survived by one daughter, Ethel Louise Trehern; granddaughter, Rebecca Trehern; grandson, Ed (Jan) Trehern, and two great granddaughters, Kourtnei Trehern and Kimily Trehern, all of Pascagoula.



Jim Ray, left, was ordained to the ministry by Mount Pisgah Church, Rankin Association, on Nov. 23. Ray is pastor of Lucien Church, Franklin Association. David Boyd, chairman of deacons, presented the certificate of ordination. John Price is pastor.

CLASSIFIED ADS

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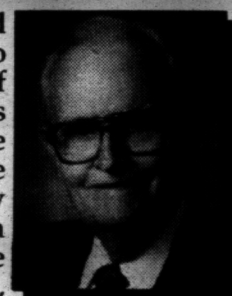
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STAFF CHANGES

Fred Tarpley, who is 85 years of age, has retired for the third time. He recently retired from Old Rice Road Church, Madison. Tarpley was the first pastor of Ridgcrest Church, Madison (when Ridgcrest Church was located in Jackson). He was also director of missions for Hinds/Madison (now Metro) Association for 16 years.



Tarpley

During his more than 60 years in the ministry he has helped organize and start 31 churches. Tarpley currently resides at the Home Place, Apt. E-5, Madison.

Walnut Church, Walnut, has called **Samuel L. Cox** as pastor effective Nov. 23. A native of Union County, Cox received his education at Blue Mountain College and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Cornersville Church, Union County Association.

Lakeshore Church, Jackson, has called **Joe Crout** as pastor effective Jan. 18.

FAMILY FESTIVAL '98

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JUST FOR THE RECORD



Center Ridge Church, Clarke Association, recently held an ordination service for three new deacons. Pictured (from left) are Jim Manning, pastor; Shannon Harvey, Thomas Griffith, and Tony Fleming, deacons.

Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames will be presented in the gymnasium of Harperville Church, Scott Association, on Jan. 25-27 at 7 p.m. This is a dramatic presentation that takes a look at what happens when you die. For more information, call (601) 625-8683.

Wade Church, Pascagoula, will honor its pastor, Bill Barton and his wife Jean, on his fifth anniversary at the church. This is also Barton's 50th year in the ministry. A reception will follow the worship service

in the fellowship hall.

The Parables of Luke will be taught at the Winter Bible Study on Jan. 25-30 at Antioch Church, Columbus. The times are Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.,



Friendship Church, Grenada, recently held a ground breaking ceremony. Construction has begun on a 700 seat intermediate worship facility. Members of the building committee (pictured, from left) are Buzz Revell; David Box; Guy A. Hughes, pastor; Doris Hughes; Gwen Graham; Bobby White; Ben Thomason; and two charter members, Woodrow and Beulah Tribble.



Members of Tishomingo Church, Tishomingo, on Nov. 17 attended a conference in Louisville, Ky., to receive an award for being one of the top evangelistic churches in the convention. Pictured (from left) are Fay Dawson, deacon, and his wife Marilla; Troy Dean, deacon, and his wife Myra; and Billy Burge, pastor, and his wife Cindy.



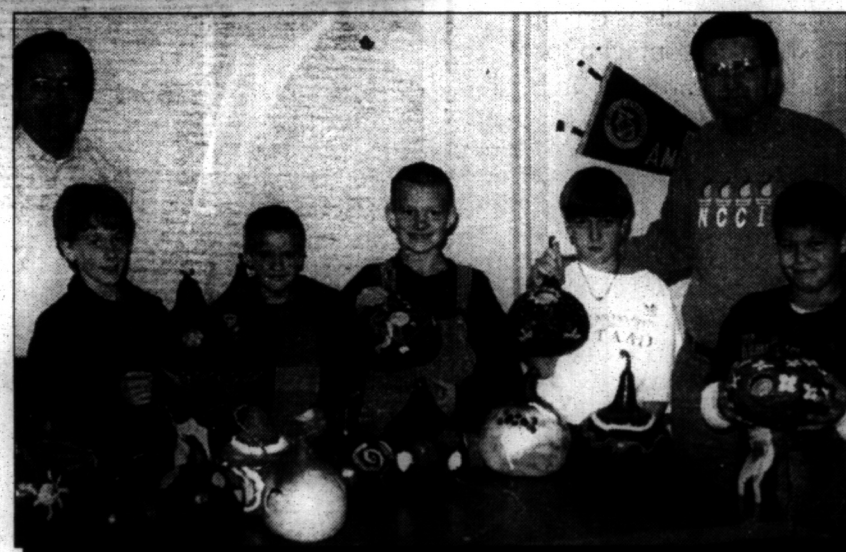
Lena Church, Lena, ordained three new deacons. Pictured (from left) are Jeffery Winstead, Michael Sherman, Scott Bell, and Tom Stevens, pastor.

LOTTIE MOON GOALS REACHED

Mt. Olive Church, Carroll County, met its Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$3,500. "All The Way in One Day," the total amount received as of Dec. 28 was \$3,741. Tommy Williamson is pastor.

Walker Hill Church, Rankin Association, set a goal of \$800 for Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. This goal was exceeded by more than \$400 with a total offering amount of \$1,207 given toward international missions. Robert Netterville is pastor.

Hepzibah Church, Lawrence Association, set its Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal at \$1,750 and received \$2,100. Paul Wilbourn is pastor. WMU director is Lois Hedgepeth.



Royal Ambassadors at Northside Church, Clinton, raised over \$800 for Lottie Moon Christmas Offering by painting gourds for bird houses and by collecting coins from their banks. The leaders are Philip Pierce and George Dale.

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Disaster relief units respond to icing, floods

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Southern Baptist disaster relief units have responded in force to the recent storm system that brought severe flooding and icing to much of the eastern United States, as well as to a "super-typhoon" that struck Guam in mid-December.

Feeding units from Ohio, Virginia, and a consortium of four Northeastern Baptist conventions have responded to icing and flood conditions in upstate New York that have left thousands living in shelters.

Also, units from Tennessee and North Carolina are responding to flooding in an area of the Smoky Mountains on their common border.

Discussions are underway regarding possible involvement

in other New England states and Canada, according to Mickey Caison, national coordinator for disaster relief and an adult volunteer mobilization associate for the North American Mission Board (NAMB).

More than 400,000 people in Maine and more than 100,000 in northern New York were without utilities days after the storm, according to the Associated Press. Outages affected 13,000 homes in New Hampshire and 6,000 customers in Vermont.

After causing deadly floods across the South, the storm spread thick, clinging ice across the Northeast and the eastern third of Canada. Fifteen deaths in Canada were blamed on the storm, five in New York, and

three in Maine. Flooding killed 11, including seven in Tennessee. The damage in Maine alone was estimated at nearly \$6.2 million.

The three Southern Baptist feeding units began operations Jan. 12. The Northeast unit, based in Syracuse, N.Y., is operating in Watertown; the Ohio Baptist Convention's unit is in Malone further to the east; and the Virginia Baptist unit is located in Plattsburg, N.Y.

All three units prepare meals for distribution to shelters operated by the American Red Cross. Southern Baptists are the only national group providing mass food preparation services for the Red Cross.

In Tennessee, the Sullivan Baptist Association feeding unit and a cleanup unit from Tennessee Avenue Church, Bristol, Tenn., responded to flooding in Roan Mountain in extreme east Tennessee.

North Carolina disaster

relief units have responded to flooding in the Newland/Bakersville area directly across the state line.

According to Caison, the warm-water pattern in the Pacific Ocean known as El Nino might have been a factor.

"Right now El Nino is impacting the southern United States and the East Coast because it is feeding the warm, moist air across Mexico and in from Southern California," he said, adding increased severity of winter storms had been expected because of the phenomenon.

Southern Baptists also are responding to the "super typhoon" that struck the Pacific island of Guam in mid-December, Caison said.

That storm left 1,350 homes destroyed and another 1,805 with major damage. More recently, an earthquake registering 5.4 on the Richter Scale shook the island on Jan. 8 of this year.

Buena Park church OK'd for new homeless shelter

BUENA PARK, Calif. (BP) — A 52-bed permanent homeless shelter in a new multipurpose building at First Southern Baptist Church, Buena Park, Calif., received unanimous approval from the city's planning commission Jan. 14.

The church's homeless ministry has been the focus of controversy — and national media attention — for more than a year.

Pastor Wiley Drake was sentenced to, then credited for, 1,500 hours of community service last September after he and the church



Drake

were found guilty in July of four counts of misdemeanor criminal actions that violated the city's zoning laws, in connection with the homeless ministry.

Drake is also the Southern Baptist Convention messenger who proposed the Disney boycott that was approved in 1997.

The church houses as many homeless people as arrive there daily, often from 50 to 75, in an enclosed patio.

Drake said Jan. 15 he is "very happy" with the planning commission's action. The new 5,200-square-foot facility will be built on faith without borrowing any money, he said.

Construction costs could range from \$25 to \$100 a square foot, he said, depending on labor and materials donated to the cause.

City review of construction plans for the church's new homeless facility will take place in February and, if approval is given, construction is scheduled to take place from June to December, The Orange County Register reported Jan. 15.

In the interim, the patio will continue to be used in the homeless ministry under a conditional use permit, Drake said.



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

I am thinking about marrying my girlfriend of four years. What should I be looking for in a marriage partner?

It is hoped that you have spent your time together to get to really know one another — without sexual involvement — and that you both have a love and commitment for the Lord. Couples often decide to get married simply because they've been together for a long time and feel obligated to each other. Such relationships often fail over the long haul. Christian premarital counseling is strongly recommended, regardless of how mature or compatible you believe the two of you to be. A most useful tool in premarital counseling is the PREPARE test, which has a reported 86% accuracy rate in assessing how successful a marriage will be. Ask your counselor about this test and other materials that are available. What should you be looking for in a marriage partner? Look for someone who is fun and willing to

try new things. Look for creativity and the desire to learn from you and your background. Most important of all, look for someone who loves the Lord as much as you do and wants to keep Jesus at the center of her life. However, those qualities can only be seen by someone who spends time in prayer and Bible study, is active in church, and himself desires to make Jesus the centerpiece of his life. If both of you are striving to reach those goals, that is an excellent indicator of the commitment necessary to make your marriage last. You must also understand that you alone do not have the power to make your marriage work, and that there is One bigger who desires to guide us in all our endeavors. Lastly, consider this equation: M = O-C. It means, "Mess equals obligation minus commitment." Before you accept one of the most important obligations of your life, be sure you have the commitment — or you're in for a real mess.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.



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LIFE AND WORK

Death and Dying

John 11:11-14, 23-26, 33-36, 43-44

By Don Lum

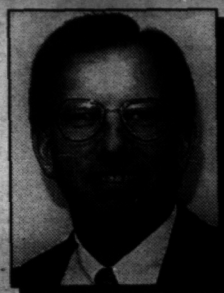
This week we finish a unit on issues of life and death. We have seen how important human beings are to God. We are so important to him, he would die for us. We have also seen that because of sin many things are going on in our culture that were not God's plan.

Today we are going to talk about death and dying. This is a lesson that as believers should give us wonderful peace and hope. At the same time, it should awaken in us an urgent need to share Jesus with those we know. Everyone will die. God's plan is for us to leave this body and enter his presence. He wants that for everyone. He wants us to share with

others how to really live so they can be prepared to die.

Death is Real (11:11-14). Lazarus was Jesus' friend. He was sick and then he died. Jesus knew. He always knows what is going on in our lives. What a wonderful comforting thought! One who loves us so much has the wisdom and the power to do anything. Never forget. He knows us better than we know ourselves.

The disciples didn't understand when Jesus said Lazarus had "fallen asleep." Jesus is so patient as he explains. "He has died and I am glad I was not there." Death is real. All of us have experienced the effects of losing someone. It is more real



Lum

to us then.

Resurrection is our Hope (1:23-26). Where Jesus is, there is life! Jesus had given life to the dead before (see Luke 7:11-15 and Luke 8:41-56). This time though the dead one had been in the tomb four days. Jesus wants to make sure they understand that he does have the power over death

— the power to give life.

There is a requirement though. Jesus says "he who believes in me shall live even though he dies." When we bury one who has given themselves to Jesus, we know that it is not the end. We know they will live in God's presence. We need to understand though, that the promise is for those who believe. As you study the New Testament, you know that believing changes your life.

Grief is Necessary (11:33-36). Jesus loved his friend so much. He shows us here that it is okay to cry. Jesus knew Lazarus

would live again on this earth, but he felt so much compassion for those experiencing the loss of separation that death caused that he cried for them. What an example for us!

Above all, we are to treat others with compassion. All of the issues we have dealt with this month cause pain and suffering to people. God would have us respond in love every time. What representatives of his we are when we love people so much that their grief becomes our grief too!

Jesus Has Power Over Death (11:43-44). Jesus spoke and Lazarus came out of his grave. The same voice that said "Let us make man in our image" now says, "Lazarus come forth."

Jesus has power through his Words to give life. He had talked for three years about life and how he could give it. Now he shows he is more powerful than the greatest enemy of man — death. If he can call one from

the grave, then surely everything that he has taught is true. We can believe him. He has power over death.

Paul says, "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

John 11 is a comforting chapter for those of us who believe. Even though death does mean physical separation and it is okay to be sad and to grieve, we do not grieve as those do without Christ. We have hope that is sure.

Conclusion. Let this lesson be a reminder that we are here to share this message with a dark and dead world separated from God. We have life because where Jesus is, there is life. Watch for ways to share the source of that life this week.

Lum is a consultant in the Miss. Baptist Evangelism Dept.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Attitudes that harm relationships

Genesis 37:3-11; 25-28

By Edna Martin Ellison

When unhealthy attitudes fester within families or other relationships, the results are disastrous. The next five weeks we will focus on Joseph, Jacob's son: his forced removal to Egypt, his imprisonment on false charges, his rise to power, the amazing reunion with his long-lost brothers, and his final declaration of God's goodness. Joseph sets a good example of someone who lived a lifetime in the presence of God.

Favoritism Leads to Jealousy (v. 3). Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons. Think how they felt, as

their father made no secret that he loved Joseph best. He was absolutely wrong to show favoritism by giving Joseph a special coat, a "coat of many colors" or "a richly ornamented robe." Whatever it looked like, it must have been some coat!

Favoritism is a manifestation of an unhealthy attitude in relationships. Sometimes parents fall into this pattern of favoritism, which can lead to a dysfunctional family. Jacob's family was indeed dysfunctional.

Jealousy Leads to Noncommunication (v. 4). It is no surprise that Joseph's brothers hated him. Jealous of the



Ellison

attention their father gave him, they "could not speak a kind word to him." (or "could not speak to him on friendly terms.") Imagining the strained conversations at mealtimes or during chores if every word was spoken in anger. Trouble was brewing.

One of the primary characteristics of a dysfunctional family is the lack of meaningful communication. When family members cannot speak among themselves about what is really going on, hurt and pain is buried. However, it does not go away. Later it expresses itself in destructive ways.

Noncommunication Leads to Self-centeredness (vv. 5-11). Unhealthy attitudes grew when Joseph—insensitive to their feelings—told them he had two dreams that he was more respected than they were. "They hated him all the more"

(v. 8). Not communicating openly, Joseph became more self-centered. The brothers also became self-centered, seething in their jealousy (v. 11). Jacob did not encourage them to communicate, air their differences, and settle the conflict. He "kept the matter (of the dreams) in mind," pondering the situation without speaking of it. A family torn apart by selfishness and jealousy became polarized and isolated.

Self-centeredness Leads to Disaster (vv. 23-28). Violence erupted as a result of self-centeredness, anger, and jealousy. Joseph's brothers took off his coat and threw him into a dry cistern (vv. 23-24). Some of them would have been happy to see him die there, but Judah, the most humane brother, suggested an alternative. They accepted his plan and sold Joseph to a passing caravan of Ishmaelite traders (vv. 25-28). What a horrible ending to a

bout of sibling rivalry!

Questions to Consider:

1. Do you show favoritism in your family? Is one child more lovable than others? Is one the scapegoat for problems? Examine your motives in administering discipline or giving special privileges.

2. Consider your feelings against co-workers, in-laws, or others: Do you show favoritism when you shouldn't? Have you allowed hatred and jealousy or other unhealthy attitudes to grow?

3. Joseph was insensitive in sharing his dream. Are you alert to feelings around you?

4. In any of your relationships, is trouble brewing because you have not cleared the air and resolved the conflict? Consider the potential for disaster if you do not face and resolve unhealthy attitudes. Pray for God's help and wisdom.

Ellison is a consultant in the Miss. Woman's Missionary Union.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

Living in humility

1 Peter 5:1-11

By Debbie Sills

Our society teaches us nothing is free. When something is offered free, we question the "catch." The same goes for responsibility. When one performs a service for someone, compensation is expected. However, Peter warns us in this chapter not to accept a position or render service for what we can get out of it. Our desire must be to give and not expect to get. We offer service out of devotion to and love for God and what he has done for us.

Lead with Humility (5:1-4).

Human nature is such that power and prestige dominate lifestyles, and is sometimes even more important than money. Some people love authority, and love the power they have over people. Intimidation drives them. However, Peter shows us in these verses that we are to be like shepherds and be an example to our flock. A shepherd is characterized by his selfless care and his sacrificial love for his sheep. He protects, guards, teaches, and loves them because he desires to do these



Sills

things, not because of the great rewards and prestige he receives from his work.

Follow with Humility (5:5-7). Often it is difficult for adults to yield to another's authority. Pride is often a key stumbling block to admitting another person is the leader over us.

Peter tells us in verse 5 to clothe ourselves with humility. God has anointed teachers and leaders among us and he wishes to guide us through their leadership. We only need to place our trust in God and understand he provides for us the best always. There are times we question the leadership of those around us. Their motives and example may not be what we think is best, but we must trust God. Remember the story about Joseph? His

brothers sold him into slavery and after all the experiences of his life, Joseph returned to his brothers who sought to eliminate him and said, "As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good" (Gen 50:20). As Christians, we should never resent the experiences of life, because we know the mighty hand of God is on the rudder of our life.

Trust God with Humility (5:8-11). Christians need to realize that God is able to take care of all our needs. Sometimes our circumstances scare us to death, but Jesus is sufficient. God is always adequate for us because he cares for us. We also need to realize that Satan will do whatever he needs to in order to deceive us. He will most certainly try to convince us God is not enough and cannot help us. We must be alert to

his ways and depend on God for strength to do what is right. If we stand firm in our faith, the devil will retreat.

It is so easy for us to become wrapped up in our troubles and problems that we become weak and unable to have the strength to continue on. Depression and anxiety come as second nature sometimes, but there is a solution. Serving one another out of desire and not for the goal of getting something in return is the key. If we are always receiving, we will become like the Dead Sea. It has no outlet, but has many inlets, that is why nothing grows there. We should focus on giving and serving as Christ did. Focus on other's needs instead of your own and see how wonderful the experience can be.

Sills is advertising coordinator for The Baptist Record.

Bibliocipher

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IJA FBFAR MAFF NU
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LJ EJM TQMKFA INTU, EJA
II Q PAQSPXF PCUK
TQMKFA MKFR TAQWFU.
XCYF UND: IJAMR-IJCA

Clue: W = P

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Ezekiel 33:9.

Teen promotes Internet pledges for TLW

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Via the Internet, an Ohio teenager has been signing up youth for the popular True Love Waits (TLW) campaign for more than a year.

Baptist Sunday School Board (BSSB) officials, meanwhile, have developed a reporting system to tally teens' pledges to abstain from sex until marriage made in churches and other settings, utilizing faxes, e-mail, and U.S. mail.

Joshua Davis, a 17-year-old Marietta (Ohio) High School senior, has received on his personal web page more than 500 True Love Waits commitments — from Australia to Singapore and nearly every state across the country.

Davis, a member of North Hills Church, Marietta, is "just a high school student who strongly supports" True Love Waits and wants to make it available to teenagers who don't have access to campaign materials.

A Southern Baptist who moved from Troy, Ala., to Ohio in 1995, Davis has been work-

ing on computers since he was 5. Today, he's a computer consultant who builds web pages, repairs computers, and performs custom programming. His web page, "Heaven on Earth Ministries,"

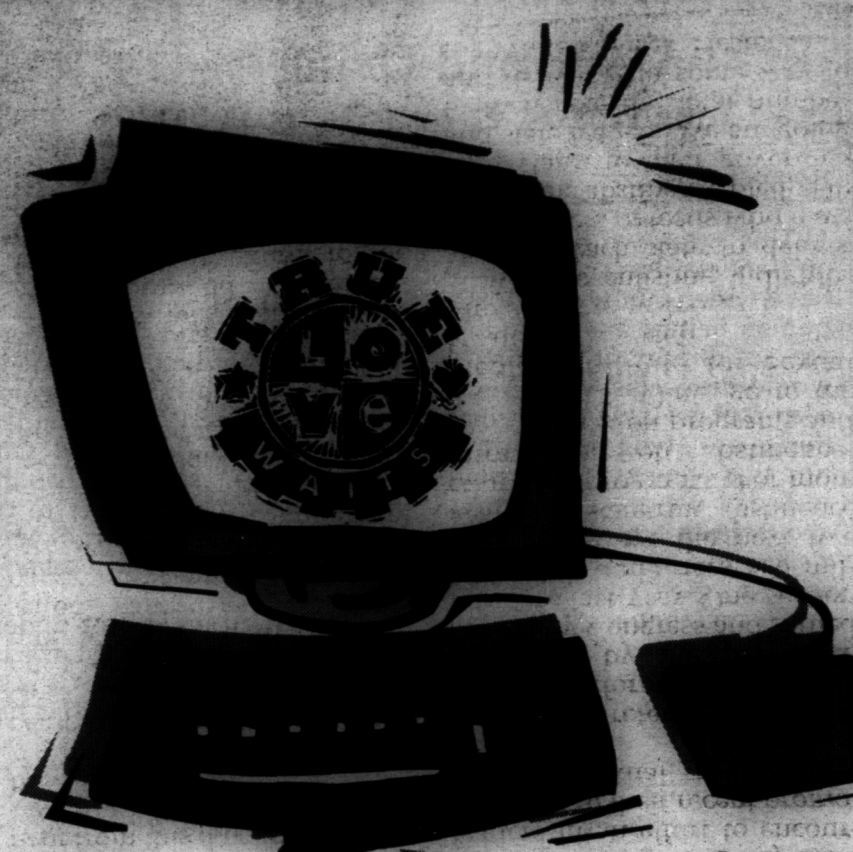
(<http://www.marietta.edu/~davis/HOEM/>), is registered as the second-largest Christian search engine on the Internet with over 800 links. (Goshen Net is the first at <http://www.goshen.net/>.)

Whenever a teenager signs the pledge through Davis' web page, he automatically receives an e-mail notice.

"I get five or six messages a day from people who have signed the pledge. Sometimes on the weekends, I get 15," he said.

Davis said he finds he can express his love for God best through computers.

"People have ways of expressing God in their own ways. I find my best talent is in computers, and I want to use my talent to give back to God what he's given to me. I put this Internet page up about two



years ago to do that."

Meanwhile, with the February 1998 True Love Waits Goes Campus Valentine's Eve campaign, Sunday School Board officials have settled on a report card that attempts to tally the total number of teenagers who have signed the True Love Waits pledge. The card is available by calling 1-800-LUV-WAIT.

Created in April 1993 by the Southern Baptist Convention's Sunday School Board, True Love Waits is an international campaign that challenges teens and college students to remain sexually abstinent until marriage.

Best estimates are that nearly half a million teenagers have signed the True Love Waits pledge card which reads, "Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, my friends, my future mate, and my future children to be sexually abstinent from this day until the day I enter a biblical marriage relationship."

The newest phase of the campaign, True Love Waits Goes Campus, was launched on Valentine's Day 1997 and will be held again on high school campuses across the nation on Valentine's Eve 1998.

"The vision for 1998 is that True Love Waits commitment cards will be displayed on every secondary school campus in America," said Jimmy Hester, one of the Sunday School Board's campaign organizers.

Students and youth leaders are encouraged to report results of their efforts to the national True Love Waits team by Feb. 27 by returning to the BSSB the TLW report card. Reports may also be faxed to (615) 251-2830 or sent via e-mail to truelovewaits@bssb.com. And

in January, an online reporting mechanism for True Love Waits will be available via Sunday School Board Online at www.bssb.com/tlwbase.htm.

TLW organizers also need to know about young people who signed cards but did not get to display them on a school campus. These cards can be reported on the last line of the TLW report card.

On April 14, True Love Waits leaders will deliver a full report (including the name of every participating public and private school and the number of students on each campus making the TLW commitment) to the office of President Bill Clinton and to other government leaders.

Finding an effective system for reporting the number of teenagers who have signed up for True Love Waits is important "because we want to take the information and deliver it to the president and key state leaders in an effort to encourage them in their recent promotion of sexual abstinence," Hester said.

Hester referred to the Welfare Reform Act of 1996, promoted by the president, passed by Congress and signed into law last year. One section of the bill authorizes \$50 million a year for the next five years for state-run abstinence education programs. (For more information on abstinence-based education programs and the federal funding, go to the Medical Institute for Sexual Health web site, <http://www.mish.org/>.)

"We are enlisting individuals from each state to deliver the numbers of teens who have signed the abstinence pledge in their states to their governors and state leaders. We are going to then take the total number and deliver it in some way to the White House," Hester said.

Teenagers comment by e-mail on sexual abstinence pledge

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Teenagers who have made True Love Waits pledges via an Internet web site established by 17-year-old Joshua Davis have electronically posted their comments about sexual abstinence.

Following are the comments from four:

Courtney Anne Couch wrote: "I'm a 17-year-old and I live in Wichita, Kan. I'm starting a club at Wichita High School East for True Love Waits (we had about 15 people at our first meeting) because I think there might be those that are pressured by their friends and maybe need a little extra help. I would like to start changing the social belief that premarital sex is acceptable, because it's not. Kids are not going to do it anyway, so we might as well give them condoms. I'm not going to do it, and what makes me so different from other kids? Sure, I might not get as many dates for this, my senior year in high school, but I think if I can change one mind, it would be worth it."

Jerry Fowler of Branson, Mo. said he "heard about True Love Waits in a book called 258 Great Dates While You Wait (Broadman & Holman), then I accidentally stumbled across it while looking at a Christian site on the web. I signed about two months ago because I always felt this was of prime importance. Sex prior to marriage leaves you feeling cheap, sleazy, and used. Being a part of True Love Waits is a gratifying experience. It may not be the most fun thing now, but when I get married, I know I'll be able to say, 'I made this promise, and now I've kept it!' I've always known that I would wait until marriage, no matter what I said to the guys at school, but being a part of True Love Waits made me realize that it's more than just abstaining, it's about trying to live sin-free."

Amy Walker of Wabeka, Ill., wrote: "I think that human sexuality is a beautiful gift from God. I want to stay a virgin until marriage because I only want to give

myself spiritually, mentally, AND physically to my husband. I'm proud that I've never had sex. It makes me feel special and unique, and that's the way I am. I'm willing to wait for the right person to marry for as long as it takes. I don't care if I'm 22 or 50 when I marry. Being a part of True Love Waits is helping me in an incredible way. I signed up to show the world and myself, in writing, that I plan to wait until marriage to have sex. Whenever I think about 'making out' with a guy I like, I think of the promise I made to myself, God, and Jesus Christ through True Love Waits. That calms me down and helps me keep myself under control."

Anna Ruston of Beach Meadows, Nova Scotia, Canada, wrote: "I heard about True Love Waits at a youth rally in October 1994. I signed up the same day that I heard about it. I was 13 at the time, I'm now 16 and still standing by that commitment strongly. I've seen so many of my friends give in to the pressure, even Christian friends. Maybe not to go 'all the way,' but just compromising their purity and giving away part of themselves to different guys. I've just recently seen a 15-year-old girl I know find out that she's pregnant, and decide to keep the child. Her whole life is going to turn upside down. I made the decision to protect myself from these things, but also to save something. I can't wait to give my husband this precious gift, on our wedding night — my virginity is a once-in-a-lifetime gift. I want him to realize how long I've loved him and how I prepared for him before I even knew who he was. Committing to this has helped immensely. It's made me more cautious of how I date, and who I date. It makes me realize that this is a serious world, with serious consequences. I'm careful to date people who share my views, people who won't try to make me compromise my standards. It's great."